

# Caring for Children in Child Welfare (CCCW) Newsletter

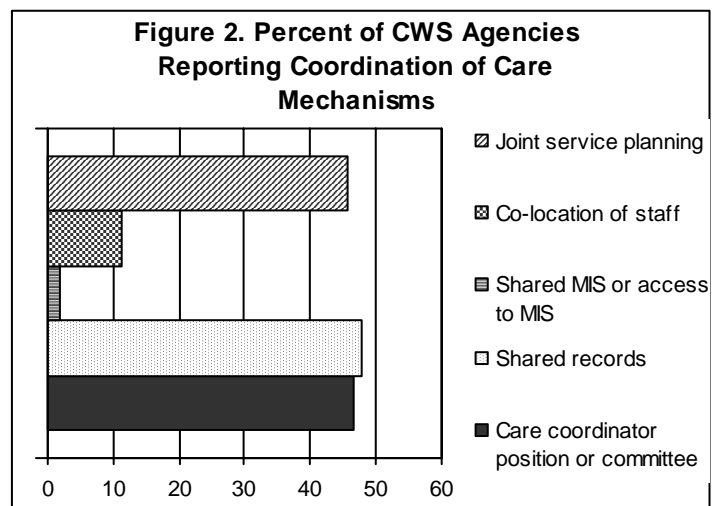
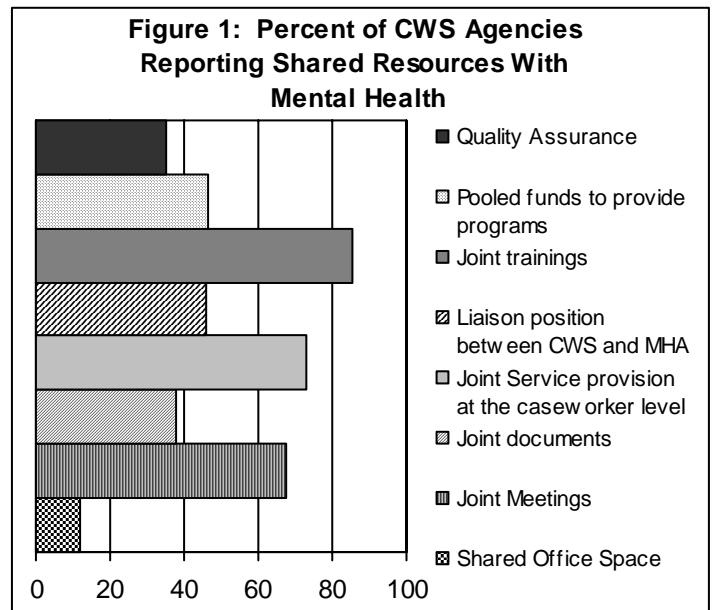
## The Relationship between the Child Welfare and Public Mental Health Systems

Children served in the child welfare system (CWS) have, or are at extremely high risk of having developmental, psychological, and social problems. However, information on which youth in the CWS receive mental health services and the factors related to service delivery is limited. The Caring for Children in Child Welfare (CCCW) study was developed from this concern: the goal of the CCCW study is to improve the delivery of mental health services for youth in child welfare through research on the variation in service use that occurs across the country. The first wave of the study collected key informant data from state and county level personnel across the nation to describe the organization of mental health services for children in the CWS. These data have been linked to child-level data collected by the National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-being (NSCAW) in order to examine need for and use of mental health services by children involved in the CWS.

The CCCW interview was broken into 12 telephone interview modules covering different topic areas. CWS respondents included supervisors, program managers, and agency directors. Interviews were also completed with Medicaid and Mental Health Agency (MHA) staff. A total of 780 individuals participated in the initial wave of CCCW data collection.

Two interview modules focused on the relationship between the CWS and the local MHA. Collaboration is occurring between the CWS and MHA (figure 1), with over sixty percent of the counties holding joint meetings and providing joint services at the caseworker level. Over 80% reported providing joint CWS-MHA trainings. When counties were asked specifically about mechanisms to ensure coordination of care between the CWS and MHA, though, fewer agencies reported formal systems in place (figure 2).

It is encouraging that collaboration is occurring between Child Welfare & Mental Health agencies to provide comprehensive and cohesive services for children and their families. To determine the impact of this collaboration, CCCW will examine the amount of shared resources and linkages between the agencies in relation to the use of mental health services by children



We sincerely appreciate the time and assistance of the Child Welfare and Mental Health personnel who participated in this study. The information shared during

these phone interviews will help to inform policy makers, agency administrators, and researchers, in an effort to improve services for children involved in the Child Welfare System.

More information on the CCCW study is available on the internet at [www.casrc.org](http://www.casrc.org)

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